

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Full Board

AGENDA ITEM: L - 6

DATE: June 26, 2009

SUBJECT: Project Lead the Way

In December of 2007, the Academic Affairs Council was provided information about Project Lead The Way (PLTW), a national program that is being supported by the South Dakota Department of Education and implemented by a number of schools in South Dakota. PLTW is a national 501c3, not-for-profit educational program that helps give middle and high school students the rigorous ground-level education they need to develop strong backgrounds in science and engineering. PLTW's curriculum works to make math and science relevant for students.

The PLTW goals are to:

- Increase the number of young people who pursue engineering and engineering technology programs in four- and two-year post-secondary programs.
- Provide equitable and inclusive opportunities for all academically qualified students.
- Provide clear standards and expectations for student success in the program.
- Reduce the future college attrition rate in four- and two-year engineering and engineering technology programs.
- Provide leadership and support that will produce continuous improvement and innovation in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs.
- Contribute to the continued vitality of the nation's prosperity.

To date, tracks have been developed in engineering and in biomedical sciences. The engineering curriculum has been implemented in South Dakota.

AAC discussed the award of college credit for students completing the high school courses offered under the umbrella of this project. According to the PLTW web site, several universities throughout the country do offer college credit for the courses (<http://www.pltw.org/index.cfm>). This appears to be quite similar to the approach currently taken with AP courses, DANTES or IB coursework. In these cases, faculty review the curriculum and assessments and decide what "scores" are needed if credit (not a grade) is to be awarded. It

(continued)

RECOMMENDED ACTION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Approve the proposal to award credit to students completing the PLTW courses, Introduction to Engineering Design, Principles of Engineering, and Engineering Design and Development provided the established conditions and processes are followed.

Project Lead The Way
June 25-26, 2009
Page 2

was agreed that staff from SDSU and SDSMT would do this and forward recommendations for consideration. These recommendations are attached.

The Academic Affairs Council and the Council of Presidents and Superintendents have reviewed these proposals and suggest that if the students complete the PLTW courses, Introduction to Engineering Design, Principles of Engineering, and Engineering Design and Development, credit be awarded if the established conditions are met and if the outlined processes are followed. The Executive Director recommends approval.